

**When a Plan is not a Plan**  
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**Lee District**

Those of us who live or work in the South County are at ground zero for BRAC. For months, we have been braced for the coming disaster in September when thousands of BRAC workers, military, and hospital patients relocate to Fort Belvoir and the Mark Center.

There is some good news. The April 13 passage of the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011 that appropriates \$150 million to widen Route One adjacent to Fort Belvoir is an important first step in addressing the added traffic congestion that BRAC will bring. This appropriation moves us a few inches from ground zero. We can thank Congressmen Moran and Connolly and Senators Warner and Webb for their recognition that BRAC's success is tied to local infrastructure improvement.

That's the good news. The bad news is that the state—with the largest responsibility for our transportation infrastructure—still hasn't noticed the existence of Route One. That's hard to imagine when Route One will be home to home to a good chunk of the impending B RAC moves to Fort Belvoir .

As the May date for the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to act on Governor McDonnell's transportation plan is less than a month away, it's one minute to midnight for Route One. The things we don't do now will have an impact far beyond the seven miles of potholed, unimproved road that is the front

door to Fort Belvoir. Route One has suffered from an unfair allocation of state transportation dollars for far too long.

Just how operationally ready and protected do you think Fort Belvoir is going to be when something as routine as a traffic accident *today* can close Route One in both directions and jam up traffic on all the alternate routes. We don't have to look any further than the March 14 and 21 accidents with fatalities and numerous injuries that closed the road in both directions. Now imagine Route One once the new community hospital on the Post opens this August with all the BRAC employees, along with the contractors that will come with them. And this on a road that hasn't been widened since 1971 and relies on only buses for public transit. You have only to experience the daily log jams on the Highway around the base *now* to realize the critical need to upgrade Route One. It's going to be hard for our military to use that impressive new hospital if they can't get to it.

So how does the Governor's plan address this critical need? First, of its 900 projects, only 31 of them are in Fairfax County, representing 6.65 percent of the total plan. We need to do much better if we are going to begin to address BRAC impacts.

If the state is really serious about addressing its infrastructure needs with a multi-million dollar transportation plan, then it can't ignore the emergency situation that's already at its front door. It's time for the CTB to take a hard analytical look at how the Commonwealth allocates its transportation dollars and then match real-time needs to real dollars. Route One needs widening, it needs better transit, and it needs it now. The longer we delay, the harder and more costly the fixes will be.

Now is the time for the state to step up to its responsibilities and become a true partner.